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DE FLAGELLO MYRTEO



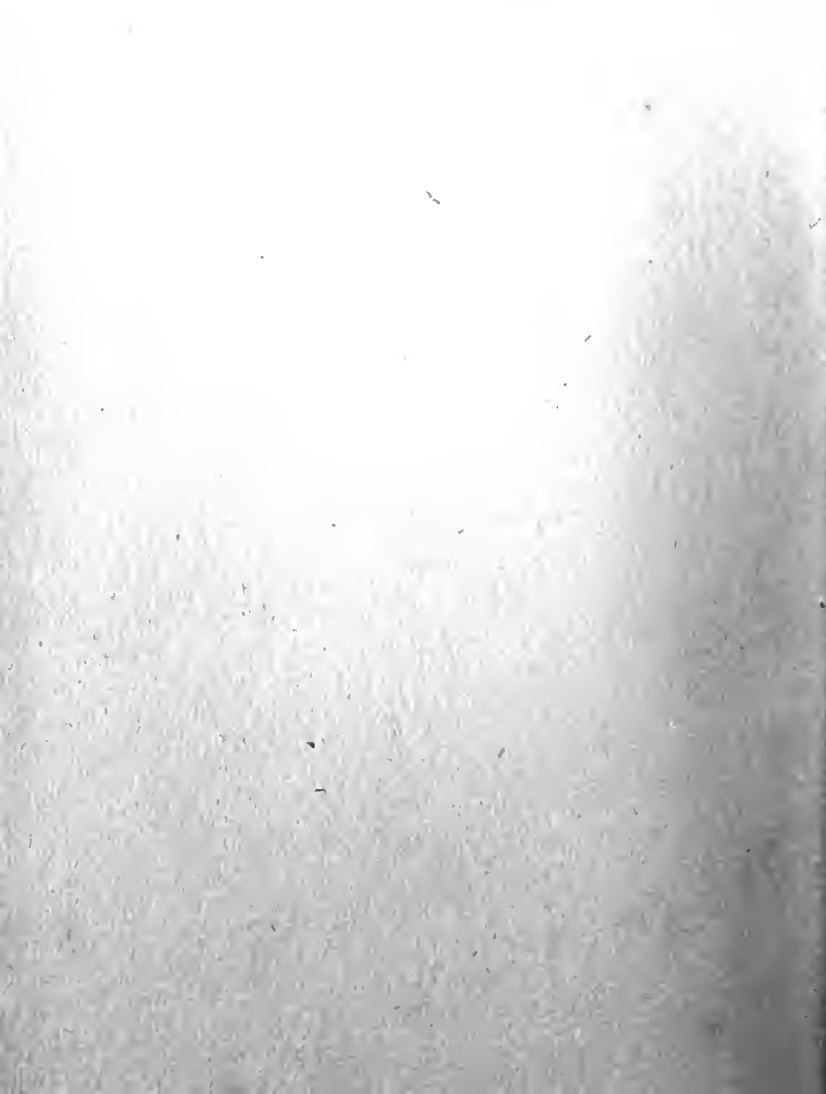
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De Flagello Myrteo

THOUGHTS AND FANCIES ON LOVE

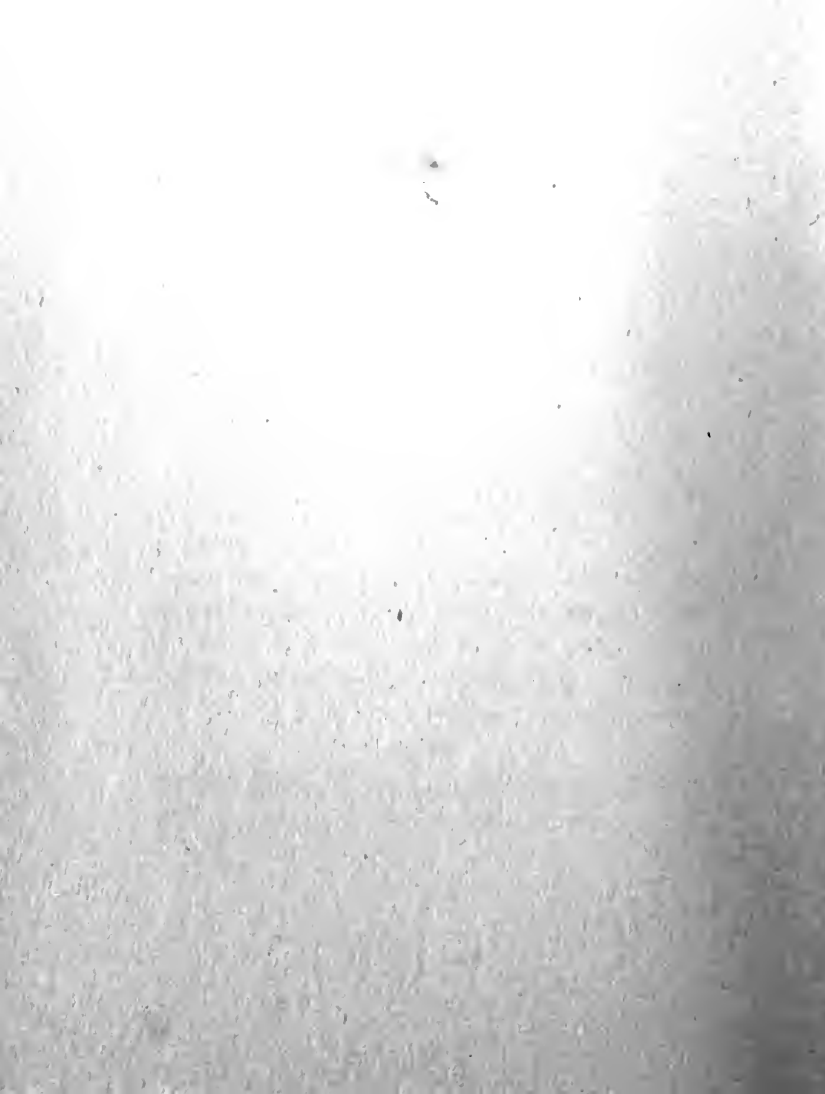
Implicat casas virentes de flagello myrteo.
PERVIGILIUM VENERIS.

LONDON
ELKIN MATHEWS, VIGO STREET

1905

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ἀνάθημα μὲν Ἑρωτι καὶ Νύμφαις, κτῆμα δὲ
τερπνὸν πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὃ καὶ τὸν ἔρασθέντα
ἀναμνήσει, τὸν οὐκ ἐρασθέντα προπαιδεύσει.
πάντως γὰρ οὐδέίς ἔρωτα ἔφυγεν ἢ φεύξεται,
μέχρις ἂν κάλλος ἦ καὶ ὀφθαλμοὶ βλέπωσιν.
ἡμῖν δ' ὁ θεὸς παρασχοι σωφρονῶσι τὰ τῶν
ἄλλων γράφειν.



De Flagello Myrteo

I.

The three eldest children of Necessity: God, the World, and Love.

II.

Could one necessary existence be more necessary than another, Love might almost be deemed more necessary than God; for Love without God we can conceive, but God without Love we cannot.

III.

God is omnipotent because all-loving. Were there any that God loved not, that creature could resist him.

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IV.

Love is God's essence ; Power but his attribute ; therefore is his love greater than his power.

V.

Love hath not called God into being, but he hath called him into energy.

VI.

The sleep of Deity had been perpetual, had he not dreamed of Love.

VII.

God may be distinguished, but not divided from the World. World without God were an effect without a cause ; but God without World were a cause without an effect.

VIII.

The aspiration of lovers : to be as necessary to each other as the World to God, and God to the World.

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IX.

The purpose of Love : that of making two lives as beautiful as God desires and the World will permit.

X.

The heaven of Love : the eternal *Thou*.

XI.

Praise of wine is ennobled by being understood mystically of the Divinity : not so praise of Love.

XII.

Would the atheist continue such, let him beware how he admits Love into his breast : for God will surely come along with him.

XIII.

Thou canst not pray to God without praying to Love, but mayest pray to Love without praying to God.

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XIV.

Implore of both that thou mayest fulfil thy Love's ideal of thee; and if this be granted thou wilt have little to desire.

XV.

Then only is Love blind when he beholds not the Ideal.

XVI.

The Ideal authenticates the lover, as the halo the saint.

XVII.

Ideal Love in this life is like the rainbow, which dwells nowhere but in heaven, yet is beheld nowhere but upon earth.

XVIII.

Thou mayest without immodesty be enamoured of thine own soul when thou findest her features in the soul of thy Love.

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XIX.

Love alone can tell the thoughts of Love, and
to do this he must look within.

XX.

Love's face to Love no earthly date betrays :
There are the oldest and the youngest days.

XXI.

Give thy Love pebble for her diamond,
If better may not be, but never glass.

XXII.

Pygmalion's bride was marble before she was
flesh, and clay before she was marble : but she
was never plaster at any time.

XXIII.

In the religion of Love, the courtesan is a
heretic ; but the nun is an atheist.

XXIV.

Make no vestal vow, unless Love himself will
be surety for thee.

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XXV.

Then is Love blest, when from the cup of the
body he drinks the wine of the soul.

XXVI.

No intimacy of caress is refused to lovers,
provided that the caress be there for the sake of
the love, and not the love for the sake of the
caress.

XXVII.

Vain the caress, though by a goddess given,
That soul as body raises not to Heaven.

XXVIII.

Earthly passion is as the song of the
nightingale, which charms chiefly at night, and
ceases after no long time.

XXIX.

The Soul would fain identify herself with
Love, and, while that may not be, her wings
are fettered, but never at rest. But her songs

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rise to heaven's threshold like the lark's, and like his fall to earth again.

XXX.

The earthly element in Love should be like God, "unseen but ever near."

XXXI.

Psyche's slavery to Venus denotes the cruelty of the yoke of Desire in the absence of Love.

XXXII.

Love and Desire contended for primacy. "Without me," said Love, "was nothing created." "Nor without me," answered Desire, "was anything begotten." Then Love admitted Desire to his companionship; but, when they walk together, Love always goes first.

XXXIII.

Seen by himself, Desire appears the least well-favoured of the Gods: but when he is in Love's company, the two can hardly be distinguished.

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XXXIV.

When Love and Desire repose together,
should Desire wake first Love continues to
slumber ; but if Love, Desire wakes along with
him.

XXXV.

For enduring union souls must be framed not
only from the same essence but in the same
mould :—

Stream with stream mingles everlastingly ;
But stream with lake is joined but to depart.

XXXVI.

Sweet is the gradual growth of affection : but
bitter the fear of estranging Friendship without
embracing Love.

XXXVII.

There is one touchstone of right and wrong
in things pertaining to Love : is Love increased
or diminished thereby ? But who shall prove
the touchstone itself ?

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XXXVIII.

Among the ancients Venus had innumerable temples, and but one oracle.

XXXIX.

None can say of Love as of Faith, "If thou had'st it even as a grain of mustard-seed." Love is everywhere, or nowhere.

XL.

To become Love, Friendship needs what Morality needs to become Religion, the fire of emotion.

XLI.

Love's fire-bearer is Sex : hence his torch is rarely kindled for two men ; and still more rarely for two women.

XLII.

Yet man and woman may dispense with the fire of Sex when they have fire of their own. In Cythna's speech to Laon (*Revolt of Islam*,

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canto 9) there is not a word which might not have been equally well said by Laon to her.

XLIII.

Not so with the description of their bridal, which could proceed from Laon alone. But his ardent words offend none, for they are spoken in Heaven.

XLIV.

Perfect Love casts out Prudery together with Fear.

XLV.

Perhaps Love never feels for his Love quite as he ought till he is able to say to her with perfect justice and sincere conviction, "O you foolish little creature!"

XLVI.

Eros did in one respect fail in his duty to Psyche; he gave her gems and pearls, scarves and zones, odours and unguents, kisses and

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embraces without number : but he never gave her anything to forgive.

XLVII.

Joy to forgive and joy to be forgiven
Hang level in the balances of Love.

XLVIII.

Teach thy Love, and rejoice if she better the instruction : but beware lest, like an unwise ruler, thou extend the domain of her mind at the expense of its peace.

XLIX.

Remember, saith the Buddhist, that in striving to become noble for thy Love's sake, thou makest merit for her also, and profitest her as well as thyself in the world to come.

L.

The alchemists strive to make gold out of base metals : and there are those who would make Love out of sensuality and self interest.

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LI.

The heart of gold befits any virtue rather than Love: for gold is the hardest to melt of any of the metals.

LII.

As the prophet would have perished but for the raven, so would Love often expire but for the duenna.

LIII.

Love would sometimes be in danger of drowning in his own honey, stood not Unlove and Dispeace at hand to draw him forth.

LIV.

The fruit of Love is savoury to the core ;
And even his wormwood is not all distaste.

LV.

Cupid is as the little barking dog that chases the flock of Eros along the road of Life.

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LVI.

Cupid can tame lions, but not himself.

LVII.

The torch of Cupid emits much heat but little light; but the torch of Eros enlightens even more than it inflames.

LVIII.

Eros deports himself reverently towards all the Gods: but Cupid would make a kite of the veil of Isis.

LIX.

The Western man drove the Oriental out of Greece in the days of Themistocles. O that the Western ideal of Woman could have done the same!

LX.

If one had disparaged Laura to Petrarch, and Beatrice to Dante, indignation would have made Petrarch voluble, and Dante dumb.

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LXI.

My Love has said things which have made me feel as one who, wandering through a fair grove, suddenly comes upon Heaven reflected in a still water.

LXII.

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
If there is any exception to this divine maxim, it is the kiss of Love.

LXIII.

One kiss cannot bestow the sweetness of a thousand, but may bestow more assurance than a million.

LXIV.

She who hath kissed, although her frame be screened,
Hath robed her soul in Coan drapery.

XLV.

If ever gentle kiss unwelcome prove,
'Tis kiss of Sleep, that steals Love's thought
from Love.

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LXVI.

Though Love be chief among Divinities,
Yet two must he petition, Sleep and Death.
“Thy poppy with my myrtle-garland, Sleep,
Twine not, nor thou thy cypress, Death, too
soon!”

LXVII.

Sleep, if thou wilt, with thy Love's picture or
letter under thy pillow, but remember not to
leave them there.

LXVIII.

Occasion ne'er comes soon enough for Love
Till she is past; then, missed be she or used,
Love ever wishes she were yet to come.

LXIX.

I offered Love gold, and he said, would'st
thou corrupt me? and spices, and he said,
would'st thou entomb me? and jewels, and he
said, darest thou think that thou can'st adorn
me? Then I gave him new feathers for his

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wings, and he flew away. When he returned I was ready with shears to clip his pinions, and he flew again. Then I gave him to the Devil, and have had him ever since.

LXX.

There is another version than Moore's, of the story of the Peri at the gate. She remained disconsolate until, encountering Love outside the rampart of Paradise, she declared that she had never until then known where Paradise was.

LXXI.

The angels charged to exclude mankind from Paradise enter it not themselves.

LXXII.

The wise and learned among the ancients, with their erroneous cosmic system, could only place the sphere of Love in the third heaven ; but the lover always knew it for the seventh.

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LXXIII.

When Silence speaks for Love, she has much to say.

LXXIV.

Better forego fifty delights than once transgress the frontier of Delicacy. But where are these frontiers? No authority has prescribed them: and they are so diversely traced, not only by different individuals, but by the same individual in different moods, that Instinct and Reason may fail to discover them. Yet, in proportion as Love and Love become as one, is this difficulty observed to diminish.

LXXV.

Reserve in War means rear, in Love means van.

LXXVI.

What a pretty dictionary might be made of the euphemisms of Love!

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LXXVII.

There was a day when the first rose came into the world ; and a day when the first grape came into the world : but there never was a day when the first Love came into the world.

LXXVIII.

Love found or fancied his wings too weak, and gat him new ones. One he borrowed from Passion, the other from Reserve. But when he fitted them on, lo ! one would draw him this way, the other that : and while they strove he hung suspended until he had sight of his Lady, when the two became in will as one, and he flew to her bosom. But on which side stood the Lady ? Ah ! that we are not to know.

LXXIX.

Not wingless is Desire, as feigned by some :
For, though he mostly pace this nether earth,
Seasons there are when he can lift to heaven.

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LXXX.

Eros is the wisest of the Gods, because the oldest, and because there is nothing from which he doth not learn.

LXXXI.

Once hath Eros wrought unwisely, when he made Death enamoured of the young and beautiful.

LXXXII.

Psyche lays her butterfly wings aside in the embrace of Love.

LXXXIII.

The radiant gleam of immortality
Trust not, nor doubt o'er much, thus Psyche
warns,
Whose very wing is but a shining dust.
Yet dust it is of Beauty, not of Death.

LXXXIV.

When from one image of Love paired with Love,
Death lifts "the painted veil that men call life."

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Then Love on earth hath sight of Love in
heaven.

Prismatic gleam, of sunshine woven and tears.

LXXXV.

Love, loving all things lovely, cannot but
love himself: but whereas in all things else he
is a master, herein is he a disciple.

LXXXVI.

If Eros had not the care of the world upon his
shoulders, he would pine away like Narcissus in
the entranced contemplation of his own beauty;
and, since the world would perish with him,
without leaving even Echo to lament him.

LXXXVII.

Eros, like Dian, inhabits heaven, earth, and
hell: his heaven is Love, his earth Passion, and
his hell Jealousy.

LXXXVIII.

Anteros marvels that no temples are erected
to him: but he in whose bosom the works of

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Love have been brought to nought, even though to its assuagement, is in no mood for the converse of the two temple-builders, Gratitude and Gladness.

LXXXIX.

The true Anteros is not Antipathy, but Love of Self.

XC.

Eros smiles when he beholds the olive of Pallas feeding the lamp of Hero.

XCI.

Pallas, Poseidon, claimed the victor's meed
When with her olive she o'ercame thy steed :
Yet sure the goodly growth was owed to thee,
For most it prospers nighest to the sea,
And, would man's care conserve the fruit benign,
Enbalméd must it be in bitter brine.

XCII.

The myrtle emblems not only love but faithful love; for it is evergreen, and its fragrance

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depends not upon the fleeting blossom but upon
the aromatic sap which is the life of its life.

XCIII.

The laurels wither and the roses pall.
O for one myrtle-leaf among them all !

XCIV.

Life without Love is as a flower without
fragrance.

XCV.

Yet even the loveless life, like the scentless
rose, may be beautiful, but it cannot be sweet.

XCVI.

Love, alas ! often puts golden treasure into
an earthen vessel ; but he never puts earth into
a vessel of gold, unless it be earth from a grave.

XCVII.

Yet the fragile vase, if of Love's rare porcelain,
may be as precious as his gold, and its frailty
enhances its preciousness.

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XCVIII.

It is said that Hope was the only good Genius left in Pandora's casket : but which of the others could have lived without her ?

XCIX.

When Love professes to live without Hope, look to his torch ; and if he speak sooth, thou wilt find that he has exchanged with Death.

C.

Rekindled torch of Love was never quenched.

CI.

Love oft by seeming flight allures pursuit,
And casts thee down that thou may'st cling
to him.

CII.

If bridge of gold for enemy's retreat
Be built, what diamond, what gem of gems
Shall pave the roadway of returning Love ?

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CIII.

Every milestone along the road of Love is a wreathed altar, and every guidemark a beckoning angel ; but he tarries not to adore the one or to sacrifice at the other.

CIV.

How the road of Love had been shortened for us, could'st thou have seen me read thy first letter !

CV.

When Love and Love encounter, ancient grief
Flees away dancing, like the withered leaf.

CVI.

Sesame in the speech of Love is interpreted :
“ Open to me who am open to thee.” The robbers’ cavern would have obeyed the spell even had it been empty ; but the heart can never respond unless it be full of treasure.

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CVII.

One shrine is barred to Love, one opes in vain.
This would profane him, that would he profane.
Thy temple, opulent and sightless God,
By foot of Eros never may be trod:
Nor Vesta's hearth the suppliant will admit:
For either he would soon go out, or it.

CVIII.

It is surprising how well Vesta has kept up
her character, considering the warmth of her
intimacy with Vulcan.

CIX.

The shrine of Modesty is the vestibule of the
temple of Love, and though the worshipper
seem to pass her by, she attends him at Love's
very altar. But Love might as easily suffer an
altar to Hatred as to Shame.

CX.

The flitting blush is as the opening of a win-
dow in Heaven: but a perpetual blush were a
perpetual stain.

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CXI.

Eros is fabled to be the offspring of Beauty, but though Beauty had been from the beginning, she were not old enough to be the mother of her own father.

CXII.

If Love desires Beauty, it is because Beauty is but his reflection, and exists by him and for him.

CXIII.

Love may transmute all things, but he could as easily destroy his own essence as his second self.

CXIV.

Eros is ancient as Necessity ;
But Aphrodite younger than the sea ;
For foam and shell in Love's delicious strife
Mingled in Ocean's deeps to give her life.
Fulgent she glows in golden beauty ripe,
But Love is her and Beauty's archetype.

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CXV.

Aphrodite hath mostly chosen mortal lovers, fearing lest Immortals should weary of her beauty's immutable perfection.

CXVI.

Aphrodite's beauty is now as when she forsook the sea ; but Psyche grows daily more beautiful under the tuition of Love.

CXVII.

There is no Virtue but is both a teacher and a learner in the school of Love.

CXVIII.

Truth of Soul, Truth of Fact, and Truth of Intellect are not the same Divinity, neither wear they the same raiment. Truth of Soul is vested in a gentle radiance, like the lamp of Psyche. Truth of Fact adapts her attire to her company. But Intellectual Truth appears as a nude woman, to intimate that Woman is rarely enamoured of her.

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CXIX.

Ignorance and Innocence are twins in the same cradle. Ignorance is never reared, and her death is either the death of Innocence also, or her immortality.

CXX.

As Love Divine Eros knows all things: as Human Love there are things which he would know if he might, and things which he might know if he would.

CXXI.

Beware of Love, unless thou knowest him for thy wisest counsellor as well as thy most persuasive.

CXXII.

If Love harangue, distrust him: if he discourse, see whether his deeds are agreeable to his words: but if he stammer, thou mayest take him to thy bosom.

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CXXIII.

Be very certain with thyself whether it is love or worship that thou cravest ; and whether thou would'st rather have thy Love in thy heart or at thy feet.

CXXIV.

The surrender of woman is the touchstone of Man, parting the noble from the ignoble as with the spear of Uriel.

CXXV.

The earthly consummation of Love is either the passing bell that precedes and announces his funeral, or the trumpet that calls him to immortality.

CXXVI.

If Passion wound Purity it is as when Achilles slew Penthesilea : but if Purity repel Passion it is as though Eurydice turned a deaf ear to Orpheus.

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CXXVII.

All the holiness of all the saints is dim beside
the radiance even of erring Love.

CXXVIII.

The fault of Love was ne'er without excuse.

CXXIX.

Love by nature seeks bright things and shuns
their opposites: yet there are times when he is
enraged with the lark, and times when he
longeth for the owl.

CXXX.

Love and Desire together in debate
Strove for the praise of generous doing. "I
Receive not without giving," urged Desire,
"Nor giv'st without receiving," laughed back
Love.

Desire's cheek reddened, but his tongue replied,
"How many a fire has vainly glowed for thee!
How full thy fane of offerings unreturned!"
Then answered Love, with triumph in his voice,
"Who willeth thus, his offering may reclaim,

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If that the recompense he too resign :
And did all lovers so with one consent,
Than sightless Plutus I were richer far."

CXXXI.

It is an oversight of Apuleius to have identified the offspring of Eros and Psyche's bridal with Pleasure, who had presided at the bridal itself.

CXXXII.

Yet Pleasure is the constant companion of Love, but not as his daughter but as his shadow.

CXXXIII.

Pleasure is self-engendered mate of Love,
Than Earth more ancient far, yet ever young,
For, ever dying, aye is she reborn.
Her progeny is Fondness, gentle child,
But destitute of wing, and brief of days.

CXXXIV.

Love can never weary of Love. If at any time he seem to drowse, be sure that something obnoxious has crept into his Paradise, that needs his torch to detect and expel.

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CXXXV.

Let not Love unfit thee for Life, lest he himself reproach thee, saying, "Why hast thou made thy good angel thy evil genius?"

CXXXVI.

As Ianthe's soul arose "in naked purity" from the prison of the body, so comes Love to Love when he can free himself from the trammels of the world.

CXXXVII.

Is life worth living? This if thou inquire,
'Tis probable that thou hast never lived,
And palpable that thou hast never loved.

CXXXVIII.

Wisdom but sounds, not sifts, the deep of Love:
The plummet never yet brought up the pearl.

CXXXIX.

The most exquisite passages of Love have least relation to the realities of life: as myrrh, in becoming perfume, ceases to be medicine.

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CXL.

Aesculapius and his serpent discourse sagely touching the infirmities of Eros.

CXLI.

The less ethereal works and ways of Love
Contemn not, lest thy scorn slur Love himself,
Who wrought them not had he not need of them.

CXLII.

“Platonic Love” in Plato’s thought is not the negation of Passion but its exaltation. In its modern acceptation it is a mask so cunningly contrived that it will serve equally well to disguise Love as Friendship or Friendship as Love.

CXLIII.

Love in his pilgrimage lets fall much that he would fain have borne along with him, but much also that he would not stoop to pick up.

CXLIV.

“My dear Ianthe!” O Love! how the pronoun devours the adjective!

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CXLV.

Would that my eyes were thine! that thou
might'st see
Thy beauty as it beams beheld by me!
But no! thy spirit dimmed her light divine,
Looked she abroad through other eyes than
thine.

CXLVI.

It is a moot point whether it be sweeter to
hear from lips of Love what you know, or what
you do not know.

CXLVII.

The inconstant woman undergoes a perpetual
metempsychosis even in this life: one never
knows into what beast her soul may transmi-
grate next.

CXLVIII.

When Tiresias recovered his original sex after
seven years, the women were in dismay: for,
"of a surety," they thought, "he has the key to
all our bosoms." "Fear not," he said, "for in

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learning to receive love as a woman, I have forgotten how to make it as a man."

CXLIX.

Illusion and Delusion had compassion on the nakedness of Truth, and came proffering her, the first a veil, the other a mantle. "Thy gift," she said, "Illusion, bear to Love; and thou, Delusion, carry thine to Hope."

CL.

The illusions of Love are not always delusions.

CLI.

I know that my Love is no mere ideal, for I must have been a God to have created it.

CLII.

Deceive not Love, nor rudely undeceive,
For if his fairy paradise he leave,
Thence must thou issue too, and exiled rove,
Estranged from fays and talismans of Love.

CLIII.

It is one thing to raise a veil, and another to rend it.

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CLIV.

Every veil secretly desires to be lifted, except the veil of Hypocrisy.

CLV.

To reveal hidden beauty without displaying it is the perfection of the speech of Love, as of the skill of Art.

CLVI.

Two classes of thy thoughts thou mayest conceal from thy Love: those that are too tender, and those that are not tender enough.

CLVII.

As the astronomer beholds the star, not directly, but by reflection, so Love and Love discern each other's thought imaged in the mirror of their own souls.

CLVIII.

As the bud a leaf, so at last the thought becomes a word.

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CLIX.

The thought that would delight thy Love
must first have delighted thyself.

CLX.

There is a distinction between Love's sweet
thoughts and his dear thoughts: the sweet
thought may remain unuttered, but the dear
thought must have been shared with another.

CLXI.

The thoughts of Love are like his caresses:
the better half of the pleasure is the imparting
of them.

CLXII.

Nothing burdens like an unshared secret be-
tween Love and Love.

CLXIII.

The sweetest thoughts of Love are his boldest
and his timidiest.

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CLXIV.

Memory is the bee of Love, who roves
To gather and store up his sweets for him.
Sting hath she too, sheathed but for fault of
Love.

CLXV.

Sweet are the words of Love, sweeter his
thoughts :
Sweetest of all what Love nor says nor thinks.

CLXVI.

The dealings of Love and Love are like the
mutual transactions of two bankrupts, who con-
tinue receiving what they know can never be
repaid.

CLXVII.

Love neither gives nor takes receipt in full.

CLXVIII.

The memory of the sweets of Love is like
manna, which needs to be renewed continually.
But the sweets differ from manna in this, that

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they may be gathered in Life's evening as well as in his morning.

CLXIX.

Love's grape matures for Youth, his wine for Age.

CLXX.

If one encounter the Ideal of his youth upon the confines of old age, it is with him as with the Magus Zoroaster, who met his own spirit walking in the garden, and perceived that its face was as the face of an angel.

CLXXI.

The *Nunc Dimittis* of the realm of Love
Is like thine, Simeon, yet dissimilar.
All sweet it sums when Youth and Youth unclasp,
But falls like snowflake from the lips of Age.

CLXXII.

The wreath of roses beseems not the aged head: but the wreath of myrtle may be borne gracefully to the tomb.

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CLXXIII.

Let Beauty sit upon the knee of Youth, but at the feet of Age: yet may Love raise her once and again.

CLXXIV.

The Love which, like the October butterfly, needs the sunshine of other Love to call it forth, must be frail, but may be all the more tender.

CLXXV.

Happy the aging man who can exchange the staff of Eld for the shoulder of Love.

CLXXVI.

O that Love were as willing to learn of Wisdom as Wisdom to be taught by Love!

CLXXVII.

It is well if Love displease not when he speaks with the voice of Reason; but how Reason charms when he speaks with the voice of Love!

CLXXVIII.

"Sense and Reason, those enchanters fair," sought each with his own wand to call up Love.

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Sense raised him, but he would not stay. Reason would doubtless have kept him, could he but have raised him. But Love both came and stayed when Reason summoned him with the wand of Sense, and Sense cited him with the wand of Reason.

CLXXIX.

The cup of Love is never void or full.

CLXXX.

At Love's high feasts there are two cups ; one never can be drained, and the other replenishes itself.

CLXXXI.

Love's choicest fruit, his garden's golden prize,
Screened in his scrip neath covering myrtle lies,
Nor will he give it forth until he see
Thee ripe for it as it is ripe for thee.

CLXXXII.

While the Tree of Knowledge, big with the destiny of mankind, was growing up in Eden,

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the little birds sang and flitted about it like any other tree. So lovers pursue their delights at the bidding of Love, nor dream that they are wreathing flowers around the axis of the universe.

CLXXXIII.

Love is immanent in Nature, but not incarnate.

CLXXXIV.

Love's arms enfold Nature, and Nature's heart enfolds Love.

CLXXXV.

Love is not Nature's soul but her guest, in whose presence she delights, and for whom she is ever adorning her habitation.

CLXXXVI.

She hath already transformed all things for the better, except Love.

CLXXXVII.

Mourn thine unworth, yet undismayed rely
On Love to smooth what Nature set awry.

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CLXXXVIII.

Nature needeth not that any should teach her wisdom ; but whatever is above and beyond Wisdom she must learn of Love.

CLXXXIX.

As an authoress Nature is open to criticism, for her Book hath neither beginning, middle, nor end.

CXC.

The first readers of the Book of Nature held it upside down.

CXCI.

Nature's book began to be understood when it was discovered to be an autobiography.

CXCII.

Knowledge opens the temple of Nature, and closes the rest.

CXCIII.

The Gods would have temples, in spite of all that Religion could say.

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CXCIV.

Religion consents that the temple shall become a museum, upon condition that the museum shall become a temple.

CXCV.

The metamorphoses of Proteus are not so various as those of Religion: but his are commonly into a baser form, and hers into one more beautiful.

CXCVI.

"Wert thou perfect as I," said Nature to Love, "thou wouldst work no miracle." "That," answered Love, "would be the greatest miracle of all."

CXCVII.

If Nature seem to persecute thee, this is not out of cruelty, but that thou mayest take sanctuary with Love.

CXCVIII.

Dian is the most correct of the goddesses after Vesta and Pallas, and when she stooped

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to kiss Endymion she commanded an eclipse, which Nature forbade to take place. "What!" exclaimed she, "may I not do what I will with my own Moon?" "*Your* Moon!" scornfully ejaculated Nature. "Well," she said, "I can at least do what I please with my Endymion." "Your Endymion!" said Love, "Endymion belongs to me and so do you, and you will both have to do exactly as I tell you."

CXCIX.

Some say that Nature sits as Isis veiled;
Some that she is the very veil itself:
But of a truth she is both veil and face.

CC.

Nature is all divine; but she is not the
Divine All.

CCI.

Nature and all above her, all beneath,
Panthea name and worship, till thou find
What found is not, was not, nor e'er shall be:
Thing without God, existence undivine.

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CCII.

The awful veil of Isis could we lift,
Panthea we should find, yet to what end?
For everywhere without she too is found.

CCIII.

Art triumphed over Nature when she made
the Centaur and the Siren; but Nature was
avenged when Art devised the Hermaphrodite.

CCIV.

The Hermaphrodite is the Icarus of Art—a
lovely but a fallen creature.

CCV.

Art unceasingly looks upon Nature; but
Nature will not look upon Art, fearing lest she
should have to look up to her.

CCVI.

Would ye, fair flowers, by Art's enchantment live,
Shielding from death your beauty fugitive,
At shrine of Love be your petition made:
Pausias will paint if Glycera will braid.

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CCVII.

Love as Painter belongs to the idealistic school—especially in portraiture.

CCVIII.

Medusa was a great realistic sculptor, the head of the Gorgon School.

CCIX.

“Assume our snakes,” said the Furies to the Graces, “that nothing may be wanting to your loveliness.”

CCX.

Before the advent of Perseus, Andromeda had hung in nude beauty upon the ocean rock sufficiently long to excite jealousy among the Nereids. “Why gaze ye,” said they to the Tritons, “upon that deformed creature, who hath not a tail?” The Tritons vowed that they were deeply sensible of the inferiority of the daughter of Earth in this particular. “We know,” said the Nereids, “that you are young

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demigods of excellent principles, but let him who thinketh he swimmeth take heed lest he dive."

CCXI.

Reserve veils the nude beauty of Art, Convention ignores it, Love deifies it.

CCXII.

The nude woman in Titian's "Divine and Earthly Love" might be interpreted as the messenger of Venus, alluring her richly dressed companion to lay aside her garments and ascend with her to the third heaven to which her fuming censer is pointing.

CCXIII.

Aphrodite hath never sinned, save when she espoused Hephaestus.

CCXIV.

The Ideal was never unchaste.

CCXV.

Rare things of Love are but for the elect:
In Lindus' temple stood an amber bowl,

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Lovely for all, sacred for him who knew
That Helen's breast had traced the mould for it.

CCXVI.

Dumb are the plastic and the graphic art,
Looking on Love the things they cannot say,
But Music unto Love on many a theme
Discourses, hearkening much from Love again,
And yet, though each hangs on the other's lip,
Their dialogue is but soliloquy.

CCXVII.

The ancients ascribed the invention of no
musical instrument to Love, for they knew of
none sufficiently sweet for him.

CCXVIII.

Music than Song steals nearer to the heart
Of Love, who of his task reminded smiles
As fond caress awakes the instrument.

CCXIX.

Eros doth nothing without Rhythm.

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CCXX.

Eros mingles not with the dance of the
Graces, but he leads the dance of the stars.

CCXXI.

We know not whether Love hath taken Life
with him to the stars ; but we know that he
awaits her there if she be not already come.

CCXXII.

"Child," said Necessity to Love, "thou
canst not open the World's doors to Life
without admitting Death also."

CCXXIII.

Necessity is bound by her own chain :
No darling may she have, no favoured child :
But, were such possible, it should be Love.

CCXXIV.

Necessity, when she would humble Love,
Sets him by Love, and fashions thus his speech :
O hadst thou asked me anything but this !

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Then, weeping, hies he from the world of light,
And shrouds himself in Erebus a while.

CCXXV.

Were Love exempt from the limitations of
Necessity, he were greater than God and the
World.

CCXXVI.

Atlas hath all Heaven upon his shoulders, yet
upon condition that he move not head or foot :
else would Heaven fall upon earth, to the ruin
of both.

CCXXVII.

Restraint and Freedom dwell together in the
house of Love, as Martha and Mary in the
house of Lazarus.

CCXXVIII.

The Love that transcends convention is as
Perseus delivering Andromeda : but the Love
that merely defies it is as Don Quixote freeing
the galley-slaves.

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CCXXIX.

Love embraces the unclad Psyche, but drapes the bride of another : as when Dante saw him bearing Beatrice, "in a coverlet, asleep."

CCXXX.

The bees that left their honey upon the lips of the infant Plato, but bore their stings away with them, are emblems of the caresses of chaste Love.

CCXXXI.

Chaste the embrace that mingles Love with Love :
Pure as the sea whence Aphrodite rose,
And stainless as the heaven that welcomed her.

CCXXXII.

The lamp of Psyche is ardent as the torch of Eros, and the torch of Eros is pure as the lamp of Psyche.

CCXXXIII.

Virginity is a form of Purity : but Purity is not a form of Virginity.

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CCXXXIV.

Love earthly and Love Divine have this in common: they are both the fulfilling of the Law.

CCXXXV.

Intellectual parentage frequently reverses the order of Nature, and Man brings forth what Woman has begotten.

CCXXXVI.

Love and Marriage are as the celestial and the terrestrial steed that draw the chariot of the soul in the allegory of Plato: but here it is the celestial courser that is unruly, and the terrestrial that is submissive to the yoke.

CCXXXVII.

Eros arose before the morning star ;
But Hymen, if old lore relates aright,
Breath from a mortal drew, and found not place
In Heaven, till place was none for him on earth.

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CCXXXVIII.

Hymen, saith Christ, is not in Heaven at all.
Yet saith he not there is not union
In Heaven of Love and Love, for ever one.

CCXXXIX.

Hymen, like Desire, is beautiful only when in
the company of Love, but then is well nigh as
beautiful as Love himself: yet, unlike Desire,
he can never be mistaken for Love.

CCXL.

The beauty of Hymen is like the beauty of
the Moon, derived from an ampler and diviner
sphere. Without the light of Love he is all
darkness, and without the attraction of Love he
flees away into space.

CCXLI.

The Gods spread Psyche's nuptial feast above
the stars: but her nuptial couch had long before
been spread upon the earth.

DE FLAGELLO MYRTEO

CCXLII.

Love, who subjugates all other existences, is never but once represented as himself in love. When at length he seeks a mate, it is not the resplendent Helen, but the fragile Psyche.

CCXLIII.

It is a beautiful thought and a deep allegory that when Psyche at last beholds the naked form of Love, she gazes with no shame, but with ever-growing delight.

CCXLIV.

Curiosity lit the lamp of Psyche, but Tenderness kept it aflame.

CCXLV.

The radiant wings of Psyche, too frail to bear her to the skies, do yet denote her destiny and home, who drew Eros from the Eternal World only that he might bear her back with him.

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CCXLVI.

Psyche's distrust of the unseen Eros were barely pardonable, did it not instruct us of the frail Human Soul's need of Love, the Enlightener and Deliverer.

CCXLVII.

In this world the Soul and Eros may never stand face to face: the veil of mortality is ever cast over him. Well for the soul if she cleave to Love and count the veil as nought: believing, without seeing, that his immortality is hers.

CCXLVIII.

Psyche with her fault, and partly because of her fault, remains the embodiment of the Eternal Feminine, essential Woman in her frailty and her divinity.

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CCXLIX.

It were peradventure no unsure criterion
between refined and rude nations, knew we by
which the Soul has been conceived as feminine.

CCL.

Though well the Ideal Soul be Woman feigned.
Type of true faith and purity unstained,
Sex must in souls as frames divergent be :
Likeness Love loveth, not facsimile.

CCLI.

The tale of Eros and Psyche is an old folk
tale, and Apuleius has left asperities in it which
a nicer delicacy would have smoothed away.
But by the master stroke of identifying the
nameless princess with Psyche he has taught us
for all time that the Human Soul receives
immortality from Love.

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CCLII.

*She fortunéd to espy a pleasant wood
Environéd with great and mighty trees.*

APULEIUS. Book V.

This little World of Love was made for thee,
O thou whose love makes World a heaven for
me.

Idle the task, the labour unrepaid,
Lit not thy sunny smile its sacred shade.
To bowers begirt with Libya's myrtle-stem
Bring in thyself the Attic diadem :
The secret dells explore, the summits bright
Ascend ; nor dread to meet another's sight.
Though many a maze allure thy curious tread,
Yet, ever roaming, ne'er wilt thou be led
To World in other than thy image made,
Or Love in other guise than thine arrayed.

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